



## NGC News

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*By Peter Anthony*

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*By ANA*

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# NGC Grades Newman Colonials

Posted on 2/13/2014

*NGC has certified the Eric P. Newman Collection Part IV, which includes a truly spectacular 1652 New England "NE" sixpence and a silver 1776 "EG FECIT" Continental Dollar.*

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation® (NGC®) has certified more than 600 American Colonial and Pre-Federal coins, tokens and medals from the outstanding collection of Eric P. Newman. Assembled over a period of more than 90 years, the selections include a number of extremely rare and high grade specimens that have not been seen publicly for many decades.

Eric P. Newman, who will turn 103 in May, is one of the greatest numismatic writers and researchers of all time and is particularly well regarded for his contributions to the study of Colonial coins and currency. His many works are reflected in the range of his Colonial and Pre-Federal holdings, which present a remarkably complete history of American coinage from 1616 to 1792.

“Eric P. Newman built a phenomenal working collection of Colonial and Pre-Federal coins that served as the basis for much of his research and writing,” says Mark Salzberg, chairman of NGC. “As a result, he has assembled an incredibly diverse collection that includes a number of amazing, high grade rarities.”

These selections comprise part four of the extraordinary Eric P. Newman Collection. The first three parts, which were also certified by NGC, have shattered records and achieved nearly \$34 million at auction.

The Eric P. Newman Collection Part IV is anchored by a number of high grade examples of important rarities. Among them is a pair of outstanding New England ‘NE’ coins, which were struck in 1652 in Massachusetts and represent the first coins minted in what would become the United States.

Newman’s (1652) New England ‘NE’ sixpence is truly spectacular. Graded NGC

AU 58, it is the finest of only eight known examples, three of which are in museum collections. The (1652) New England 'NE' shilling is also impressive with an NGC AU 55 grade, which ties this incredible rarity with one other piece for the status of finest certified.



(1652) New England 'NE' Sixpence NGC AU 58  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The selections include two 1652-dated Willow Tree coins, which were struck in Massachusetts following the New England 'NE' coinage. Newman's Willow Tree sixpence, graded NGC VF 25, is one of just 14 specimens known. His Willow Tree shilling is also graded NGC VF 25.

Other early American Colonial pieces represented in Newman Part IV are the Sommer Islands "Hogge Money," which were struck circa 1616 in twopence, threepence, sixpence and shilling denominations for the Sommer Islands, now known as Bermuda. Remarkably, the Newman selections feature all four denominations, including a sixpence in NGC AU 50 BN and a shilling in NGC AU 55 BN.

Newman Part IV boasts five varieties of the rare Higley threepence, which were struck in Connecticut by Samuel and John Higley from 1737 to 1739. Among these pieces is a 1737 Three Hammers 'CONNECTICVT' threepence graded NGC AU 50 BN, considered to be the finest known of all extant Higley coppers.

Among the most significant later issues is the 1776 'EG FECIT' Continental Currency dollar in silver. Graded NGC MS 63, it is the finest of only two known silver specimens and is undoubtedly one of the most significant pieces in the Newman selections.



1776 Silver 'EG FECIT' Continental Currency Dollar NGC MS 63  
*Click images to enlarge.*

Several important early United States patterns are in Newman Part IV. The 1783 Nova Constellatio pattern 100 Units or “Bit” in the Newman Collection, graded NGC AU 55, is unique with a plain edge. The Nova Constellatio patterns are significant as the first official proposed coinage for the United States and more broadly as the first attempt to create a decimal coinage system.

The 1792 Judd-1 Pattern Silver-Center cent in NGC MS 63+ BN is the third-finest of only 14 specimens known. Newman Part IV also includes the rare 1792 Judd-10 Pattern disme (dime). The finest example certified by NGC, it is graded NGC AU 55 BN.

While not an official pattern, the rare 1787 Immunis Columbia is considered to be a private proposal for an early United States coinage. The Newman example is pedigreed to the famed Parmelee, Ten Eyck, Newcomer and Green collections. Overstruck on a broad flan, it is graded NGC AU 55 BN.

Similarly, the 1787 George Clinton Excelsior pieces were struck for a proposed coinage for New York State. Newman Part IV includes an MS 63 BN example—an astonishingly high grade for this very rare issue.

A handful of extremely rare, high grade 1786-1788 Connecticut coppers are among the Newman selections. The 1787 Figure Right Connecticut in NGC F 12 BN is the finest of only two known examples of the Miller 1.4-WW variety. A 1786 Backwards 'D' Connecticut copper, attributed as Miller 2.5-V and graded NGC VF30 BN, is believed to be unique.

Stuart Levine, himself a respected scholar of Colonial and Pre-Federal coinage,

serves as numismatic advisor to Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society.

Selections from the Collection of Newman Part IV will be sold by Heritage Auctions in New York May 16-17, 2014. The catalog, including images and descriptions, will be posted on the Heritage Auctions website (HA.com) in April.

**EPNNES Foundation Statement** Items being sold are from the extensive collection of Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society (a Missouri not-for-profit corporation) and have been assembled over a period of 90 years. Proceeds of the sale of all items will be used exclusively for supplementing the Society’s museum operations and scholarly numismatic research efforts and for the benefit of other not-for-profit institutions selected by Eric P. Newman Numismatic Education Society for public purposes.



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United States

# Submit World Coins for Special NGC Labels

Posted on 2/17/2014

*Submit your Australia, Canada, Panda and Lunar coins for new special NGC certification labels and the Early Releases and First Releases designations.*

NGC is now offering several attractive certification labels to collectors and dealers who submit eligible coins under the Modern Tier and select the Special Label/Releases service. These special NGC certification labels can greatly enhance the presentation of your coins.



When submitting coins for these new labels, select the **Modern** tier or higher and select **Special Label/Releases**. Check the NGC website for Early Releases cutoff dates. Special Label/Releases must be selected even if Early Releases is not desired or if coins are received after the cutoff date for this designation.

## Submission Instructions:

- Select the **Modern** or higher tier and **Special Label/Releases**. Eligible coins:

- Australia Label: All Australia coins issued 1970 to date
  - Canada Label: All Canada coins issued 1970 to date
  - Panda Label: All Chinese Panda coins and medals
  - Lunar Label: All Dragon, Snake and Horse coins and medals
- 
- All paid NGC Collectors Society members and NGC Authorized Dealers may submit coins for these labels.
  - The 5-coin minimum applies to the Modern tier.
  - ReHolders must be submitted under the Special Label ReHolder service tier.
  - **Coins for any of these labels MUST be on their own submission invoice. The coins cannot be mixed with other coins to qualify for this label.**
  - Write the requested label (i.e., NGC Australia Label) on the submission form.

To see coins eligible for Early and First Releases<sup>®</sup> designations, [click here](#).

NGC will accept submissions at trade shows, but they are not eligible for on-site grading.

Dealers and Elite Collectors Society members should contact [Scott Heller](#) at NGC for bulk submissions.

Questions? Contact NGC Customer Service at [service@NGCcoin.com](mailto:service@NGCcoin.com) or 1-800-NGC-COIN (1-800-642-2646).

Collectors Society paid members can submit their coins directly to NGC. Not an NGC Collectors Society member? Paid memberships start at just \$39/year. Join as a Premium member, or upgrade to Premium membership, and you'll receive a coupon to have five coins graded for free. [Join today](#).

Check out the complete line of [NGC certification labels](#) available to all submitters.

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# GreatCollections Added to NGC Auction Central

Posted on 2/10/2014

*NGC's free online auction research tool now includes GreatCollections auctions.*

NGC has added GreatCollections upcoming and prices realized auctions to NGC Auction Central, a free auction research tool on the NGC website ([NGCcoin.com](http://NGCcoin.com)). Prices realized with links to the GreatCollections lot description have been posted for more than 105,000 coins. Upcoming GreatCollections auctions and recently completed sales will be posted on a regular basis.

The addition of GreatCollections auction results is part of NGC's efforts to build the most comprehensive free online auction database. NGC Auction Central now includes nearly 2.2 million auction results representing total prices realized of \$3 billion. Upcoming auctions are posted weekly.

In addition to auctions from GreatCollections, NGC Auction Central includes data from Heritage Auctions, Stack's Bowers, Teletrade, Goldberg, David Lawrence and others.

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 United States 

# NGC Certifies One of Australia's Most Important Coins

Posted on 1/23/2014

*The 1852 Adelaide 5 Pound is one of only seven surviving examples. The coin headlines the St. James's Auctions sale to be held March 5 in London.*

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation® (NGC®) has certified one of the rarest and most important Australian coins. The 1852-Dated Adelaide Gold 5 Pound, graded MS 66 by NGC, is one of only seven surviving examples and one of just two in private hands. It headlines the March 5, 2014 St. James's Auctions sale in London, where it is expected to set a new world record price for an Australian coin.



Australia 1852-Dated Adelaide Gold 5 Pound, MGC MS 66  
[Click images to enlarge.](#)

The discovery of gold at Sutter's Mill in California in 1848 prompted some Australians to travel to California to prospect. When they returned to Australia,

many continued to search for gold, hoping to find deposits locally. In 1851, gold was discovered in abundance in the South Australian state of Victoria, prompting the first South Australian Gold Rush.

At the time, Australia was facing an economic crisis due to the lack of coinage in the country. The circulation coinage consisted entirely of coins minted outside of Australia and imported into the country. This limited supply of coinage was further depleted as people left their homes to search for gold, bringing their money with them. As a result, the South Australian economy came to a standstill.

With the urgent need for coinage, the South Australian Legislation passed the Bullion Act in 1852, which authorized the Government Assay Office to strike ingots in denominations of one pound and five pounds that could circulate as coins. Only 24,768 of the 1852 Adelaide Pound were minted and most were later melted when Great Britain supplied Australia with additional coins. Today it is believed that around 250 of the 1852 Adelaide Pounds survived the melting pot.

Although none were struck, the original dies for the 1852 Adelaide 5 Pound survived and in 1921 the Melbourne Mint borrowed them to strike examples for museums and collectors. Twelve 1852-Dated Adelaide 5 Pound coins were struck in gold using the original 1852 dies and two examples were struck in silver although neither is known in private hands. In 1929, five of the gold pieces were melted after failing to be bought by collectors for as little as the gold value, which at the time was 10 Pounds. Of the seven examples of the 1852-Dated Adelaide 5 Pound Restrikes that still exist, five are currently in museums or public collections.

With only two examples available to collectors, this issue is one of the great rarities of Australian numismatics. Its sale at the March 5, 2014 St. James's Auction will be the first public appearance of an Adelaide 5 Pound outside of Australia since the Sotheby's sale of this coin in 1971. With an estimate of \$650,000 to \$700,000, this NGC MS 66 specimen will likely become the most valuable Australian coin ever sold.

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# NGC Recognizes Top 100 Liberty Seated Dime Varieties

Posted on 2/12/2014

*The NGC VarietyPlus service will recognize Liberty Seated Dime varieties listed in the online reference by researcher Gerry Fortin. Such varieties will receive an F-number attribution on their NGC certification label.*

Numismatic Guaranty Corporation® (NGC®) has announced that it will now attribute Liberty Seated Dime varieties listed in the “Top 100 Liberty Seated Dime Varieties” online reference by collector and researcher Gerry Fortin. The varieties will be attributed on the NGC certification label with an “F” number under NGC’s VarietyPlus® service.

First issued in 1837, the Liberty Seated Dime series spanned a remarkable 55 years, a period during which the dime was a crucial coin in American commerce. To meet the public’s demand for the denomination enormous quantities were struck, which inevitably resulted in a significant number of variations, including doubled dies, repunched dates, misplaced digits and other varieties.

As collector interest in Liberty Seated coinage grew in the early 1970s, efforts were made to catalog the numerous die varieties found in the series. Liberty Seated Dime die variety discoveries were published in the newsletter of the Liberty Seated Collector’s Club, Kamal Ahwash’s 1977 *Encyclopedia of United States Liberty Seated Dimes*, and the 1991 publication of Brian Greer’s *The Complete Guide to Liberty Seated Dimes*.



1838 Large Stars 10C  
Top 100 F-106  
Obverse Die crack  
*Click images to enlarge.*

A comprehensive list of Liberty Seated Dime varieties, however, did not exist until the launch of Fortin's website, [www.SeatedDimeVarieties.com](http://www.SeatedDimeVarieties.com), in 2004. The detailed eBook lists all known die varieties and die states with rarity estimates and high resolution photographs.



1838 Partial Drapery 10C  
Top 100 F-108a  
RPD & Reverse Die Clash  
*Click images to enlarge.*

The most popular feature of the site is the “Top 100 Liberty Seated Dime Varieties,” which over the last decade has served to greatly expand collector interest in the series’ most important varieties. Responding to the demand for greater recognition from collectors and dealers, NGC will now recognize these varieties on its certification label.

A complete list of eligible varieties will be posted to the [VarietyPlus](#) section of the NGC website, [www.NGCcoin.com](http://www.NGCcoin.com). To submit coins for attribution with the Top 100 variety, check VarietyPlus on the NGC submission form.

NGC will soon launch a new competitive NGC Registry set category for the Top 100 Liberty Seated Dime die varieties.

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United States

# NGC Introduction to Grading Class

Posted on 1/21/2014

*NGC will be offering its popular Introduction to Grading class on March 29, 9 a.m.–4 p.m. Register today!*

NGC will conduct an Introduction to Grading class on Saturday, March 29, 2014 from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Whitman Baltimore Expo. The cost for the class is \$149 to the first 20 paid NGC Collectors Society members (new attendees only) who register. Lunch will be provided. Classroom space is provided courtesy of the Whitman Expo.

Introduction to Grading will cover a variety of important grading topics including proper lighting, the subtleties of About Uncirculated versus Mint State, counterfeit detection, the differences between strike versus wear and the key attributes commonly considered to constitute positive eye appeal.

The class will be taught by NGC grader John Schuch, II. John joined NGC in 2004 and has worked as a grader for 9 years, advancing his knowledge and passion for rare coins. He has taught numerous grading classes at the American Numismatic Association's Summer Seminar.

The class is limited to 20 students and is available to paid NGC Collectors Society members on a first-come basis. New attendees only. **Advance registration is**



John Schuch, II, NGC Grader

The son of a coin dealer, John grew up around coins. He started working summers for his father at the age of 15, bird-dogging coins for dealers. After high school, he worked full time for his father's business. At 20, John enlisted in the Army and served for four years. After

**required.** Click [here](#) to register. Enter code: grading329 and press the "Proceed" button. You will receive an email with payment instructions.

If the class is full, email [class@ngccoin.com](mailto:class@ngccoin.com) to be added to a Wait List. You will be contacted if space becomes available.

leaving the Army, he decided to pursue numismatics as his career. He joined NGC in 2004 and has worked as a grader for 9 years, rising up the ranks advancing his knowledge and passion for rare coins.

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# NGC Accepting Submissions at ANA

Posted on 2/3/2014

*Drop off your NGC grading submissions at the ANA National Money Show.*

NGC will be accepting regular submissions for all service levels\* at the [ANA National Money Show](#), at the Cobb Galleria Center in Atlanta, GA from Thursday, February 27 to 12:00 noon on Saturday, March 1, 2014. NGC will be at table 116. All submissions will be sent to our office in Sarasota, FL. Services include World Services, Ancient Coin Services, Bulk, PHOTO PROOF® and more. Check with show representatives for details including cut-off times.



## Note:

- Due to the special handling required, NGC does not accept submissions of the following coins at this show for regular service submissions to be returned to the NGC offices: Coins over 3.5" (90 mm) in diameter and .39" (10 mm) in depth, 2013 American Buffalo One Ounce Gold Reverse Proof, West Point 2-coin set, San Francisco 2-coin Proof set, Coin & Currency sets, 25th Anniversary Eagles, 20th Anniversary Eagles, Early/First Releases, American Liberty Series and 10th Anniversary Platinum Sets. These submissions must be sent directly to Sarasota, FL, by the submitter.
- \*Does not include 5-ounce coins.

Questions should be directed to NGC customer service at [service@NGCcoin.com](mailto:service@NGCcoin.com) or 1-800-NGC-COIN (642-2646).

Visit our table for answers to any questions about the services offered by NGC. Please remember that NGC does not provide opinions or free evaluations of coins at trade shows.

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# NGC Ancients: “Greek” Coinage of the Ancient World - Part 1

Posted on 2/18/2014

*In the first article of this two-part series, NGC Ancients examines the Greek influence on coinage of ancient Eastern civilizations.*

A survey of ancient “Greek” coinage makes one thing very clear - the field is actually much larger than its name would imply. This becomes apparent when one considers that coinage was probably not a Greek invention, but rather an existing concept that they adopted and then perfected.

Though Greece was located in the eastern Mediterranean, Greek sailors constantly sought new territory. By the time the use of coinage became widespread in the mid-5th Century B.C., the Greeks had established cities throughout the Mediterranean world. Striking out as far west as Spain, as far south as Cyrene in North Africa, and as far north as the Straits of Kerch on the northern coast of the Black Sea, it was only natural that Greek culture would take root in these colonized regions. Indeed, the use of coinage by Celts, Phoenicians, Egyptians, Indo-Greeks, Arabians and other peoples can be ascribed largely to their interaction with the Greeks.

When conducting a brief survey of these “other Greeks” who struck coins, it would be natural to start with the inhabitants of Ionia and Lydia (in the western part of modern-day Turkey), who introduced coinage to Western

civilization. This hekte or sixth-stater is thought to have been struck in Ionia at an uncertain mint c.600-550 B.C. It was made of electrum (a metallic combination of gold and silver), and was among the earliest figural type coins produced (i.e., it depicts an animal or person rather than abstract design elements). Coinage such as this was adopted by local rulers and later by the kings of the Persian Empire.



The Persian kings struck coins until the 330s B.C., when their empire was conquered by the Greek king Alexander III “the Great.” Even after this defeat, the Greeks who came to rule the former Persian territories continued to strike Persian-style coins, including gold darics



such as this rare piece, down to c.300 B.C. It is also worth noting that though the Persians may take credit for introducing coinage to Egypt, it nonetheless was Greek-inspired, as Persian coins of Egypt were simply imitations of the famous “owl” tetradrachms of Athens.

This imitative owl was struck in Egypt c.343/2-338/7 B.C. under Artaxerxes III Okhos as Pharaoh of Egypt.

Meanwhile, in the course of conquering most of the known Western world, Alexander the Great established the longest-lasting system of royal Greek coinage. His imperial coinages, such as this tetradrachm, are among the most recognized and widely minted coin types of the



ancient world. Moreover, Egypt’s first king after Alexander III, Ptolemy I, founded a dynasty that issued coins down to 31 B.C., when Queen Cleopatra VII lost her kingdom to Rome’s first emperor, Augustus. This coin is

an early example of a Ptolemy I tetradrachm, and clearly displays Alexander’s influence.

In Asia Minor there were several non-Greek kingdoms that produced coinage. Along the southern shore of the Black Sea the kings of regions of Cappadocia, Bithynia and Pontus struck coins that were Greek in fabric and content, but which featured their own Asiatic



style. The Eastern influence is most apparent in the royal portraiture, where engravers seem to have made a particular effort to make their rulers appear non-Greek. This drachm of the Pontic King Pharnaces III (c.200-169 B.C.) is a good example of how coins from this region retained noticeable Greek elements while still displaying traits more associated with regional cultures.

Further East, in the region now principally comprising Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan and Pakistan, coins were struck in Armenia, Parthia, Elam, Persis and Bactria. Though the Greeks were certainly known in these areas from the era of Alexander III and his successors, their influence was reduced with the passage of time.

In regards to another region, the Greeks had both strong ties and conflicts with the Phoenicians, who ventured far beyond their homeland to establish a network of trading posts throughout the Mediterranean. The Phoenicians did not adopt coinage until the late 5th Century B.C., but quickly made up for lost time by producing coins in tremendous quantities. The Phoenicians are remembered for their local coinages in Phoenicia as well as the impressive coinages struck at Carthage and at their overseas holdings in Sicily, Corsica, Spain and elsewhere. This “Siculo-Punic” tetradrachm is a good example of one of the Greek-inspired coinages of the



Carthaginians. On this coin the influence of the coinages of Alexander III is noted in the portrait of Heracles. By contrast, this slightly earlier tetradrachm, struck by the Carthaginians to finance their Sicilian invasions of the late 4th century B.C., is clearly

indebted to the local coinage of Sicily, while showcasing the Carthaginian design elements of a horse and a palm tree.

Interested in reading more articles on Ancient coins? [Click here](#)

*Images courtesy of Classical Numismatic Group.*

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 United States 

# Counterfeit Detection: 1928 Peace Dollar

Posted on 2/18/2014

*Since so many counterfeit 1928 Peace Dollars are, in fact, altered 1923 coins, it is particularly useful to know the diagnostics that are seen on legitimate examples.*

The 1928 Peace Dollar had the lowest mintage of any issue in this popular series with only 360,649 examples struck. NGC has graded just under 7,000 pieces with the vast majority in the AU 58 to MS 64 grade range. According to the [NGC US Coin Price Guide](#), an AU 58 trades for \$475 while an MS 64 is valued at \$1,375.

As one might expect, counterfeiters have targeted the 1928 Peace Dollar. Many of the spurious specimens are actually altered dates—the 1923, which is very common, can be easily changed to a 1928. An example with this alteration was recently submitted to NGC.



Counterfeit 1928 Peace Dollar  
Click images to enlarge.

On this piece, the numeral 8 stands out from the rest of the digits in the date. Even without magnification the 8 appears tooled and under a loupe the tooling becomes quite obvious. In an effort to obscure the alteration, the forger has harshly cleaned the lower half of the obverse. Cleaning will oftentimes help to

disguise tool marks or otherwise distract from the more significant problem—the alteration.



*Click image to enlarge.*

Genuine 1928 Peace Dollars were struck from only four different obverse dies and each has a different diagnostic that aids in identification. One obverse die has a raised line connecting two strands of Liberty's hair in the lower right.



*Click image to enlarge.*

The second die has a raised line from the middle of the B in LIBERTY through the tiara to the right and another raised line to the left of the E in LIBERTY.



*Click images to enlarge.*

A third obverse die has an oval patch of raised die polish lines within the tiara to the right of the B in LIBERTY although these can be difficult to see on circulated examples. The final obverse die is identified by the raised lines that go to the right from the lower part of the E in LIBERTY.

Familiarity with the diagnostics of the four obverse dies used to strike 1928 Peace Dollars makes identification of genuine specimens much easier. Since so many counterfeit 1928 Peace Dollars are altered from 1923s, it is particularly useful to know the diagnostics that are seen on legitimate examples. While they are not foolproof, these diagnostics add a significant level of confidence when authenticating a 1928 Peace Dollar.

Interested in reading more articles on Counterfeit Detection? Click [here](#).

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United States

# USA Coin Album: Coins of the 1950s - Part 6

Posted on 2/18/2014

*This series comes to an end with a look at the half dollars coined between 1950–59.*

After collecting the smaller coins from circulation starting around 1965, I didn't buy any folders for half dollars until a couple years later, by which time nearly all the halves in circulation seemed to be of the silver-clad composition. These coins actually debuted in the spring of 1966, though the initial issue was dated 1965. I managed to find all of the Kennedy pieces with little effort, as halves still circulated in the San Francisco area where I lived. I also found several Walking Liberty halves in change, yet I never once saw a Franklin. It was thus a somewhat mysterious coin to me.



The San Francisco Mint, which was just a few miles from my home, hadn't coined half dollars since 1954 (and even then in just modest numbers), so it didn't surprise me that they weren't to be found. I came to know this series only years later when I put together a gem set from dealers' inventories. All of my purchases were raw, as this was very early in the era of certified/encapsulated coins, and no one was submitting Franklins or other "modern" coins then. In fact, they were still being traded mostly by the roll. I witnessed many a dealer break open original, bank-wrapped rolls that had nicely toned end coins and then routinely dip each and every piece white, after which he would give the coins just a cursory rinse before setting them out to dry. The same fate befell many coins retrieved from the Mint's cardboard-mounted Uncirculated sets of 1947-58 period, as these sets carried very little premium at the time, and toning was something few appreciated until recently.

The decade of the 1950s began in economic recession, but the onset that year of the Korean War and other factors boosted the economy enough to drive up mintages. The Philadelphia Mint increased its production of halves rapidly through 1952, when it struck more than 21 million, after which time this output plunged to just 2,668,120 the following year. The 1953(P) issue did not seem to undergo the massive hoarding of fresh rolls that the 1950-D nickels experienced, but collectors did draw most examples from circulation by the early 1960s. Philadelphia never again coined half Franklin halves in large numbers until the coin shortage year of 1963, subsequent mintages of the 1950s not exceeding the single millions except in 1954. Both the 1955 and 1956 Philadelphia halves had relatively small mintages and were widely hoarded by the roll. The 1955(P) half dollar in particular is rare in worn condition.

The Denver Mint was the main coiner of half dollars throughout the decade, though it too put out relatively small numbers during 1950-51. Compared to the mintages of other silver denominations during these years, it is obvious that half dollars were beginning to fall into disuse. The San Francisco Mint coined no halves in 1950, but it produced a generous 13,696,000 pieces in 1951. After that year, however, production slumped to around a third that number for each of the three remaining years of half dollar coinage in California.

The Franklin half dollar during the 1950s conformed to trends noted for other denominations of those years. As a general rule, the Denver Mint coins were the most consistently well struck pieces, at least by the low 1950s standard. P-Mint halves were likely to show a bit more die erosion and incomplete details, and the San Francisco coins were almost always poorly struck from very tired and blurry dies. One of the side effects of this soft detail is that it tended to both resist and hide contact marks and other flaws, which has resulted in S-Mint Franklins having higher certified populations of gem pieces than coins of the other mints. In contrast, the sharply struck Denver coins are the ones with the smallest numbers of certified gems for each date, while the Philadelphia issues fall between these extremes, though far behind the San Francisco coins.

As with many 20th Century coin series, specialists in the Franklin half dollar have focused on one particular feature in determining a well struck coin. The horizontal lines spanning the Liberty Bell are quite shallow in the reverse die, yet they appear within one of its deepest cavities. These two conditions conspired to render the lines incomplete or almost indistinguishable on the majority of coins, and advanced collectors will pay various premiums depending on the individual rarity of each date/mint combination having Full Bell Lines (FBL). The major grading services identify such coins routinely, and these pieces are given separate line

entries within their published population reports. The relative rarities of Full Bell Lines on Franklin halves conform to the same overall pattern of striking described above for the three mints, with Denver Mint halves being the ones most likely to display FBL and S-Mint halves the least likely.

This coin series is not rich in die varieties, but a few are worth mentioning. There are several doubled-dies within the currency issues, but these are quite minor compared to those of other denominations during the 1950s. More collectable are the various repunched mintmarks, the 1951-S/S being the most distinctive. There’s also a triple-punched mintmark for 1952-S, with the first and second impressions flanking the final, deepest one.

*David W. Lange's column, “USA Coin Album,” appears monthly in the Numismatist, the official publication of the [American Numismatic Association](#).*

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# World Coins: China 1905 Kirin Dollar

Posted on 2/18/2014

*Deceptive China 1905 Kirin L&M-557 Dollars feature the same repeating marks that can be used as diagnostics to detect the fakes.*

Counterfeiters of Chinese coins continue to make new high quality fakes that are very deceptive. One such deceptive practice is to use damaged coins to make counterfeits so that people pay more attention to the damage than to the authenticity of the coin.



Counterfeit China 1905 Kirin L&M-557 Dollar  
Left to Right: Coin 1 Obverse; Coin 2 Obverse  
*Click image to enlarge.*

Recently, we have been seeing a deceptive China 1905 Kirin L&M-557 Dollar. This piece has been made using a transfer die method in which a host coin is used to make dies to produce counterfeits. The real danger with transfer dies is that the design elements will be correct if transferred correctly. Such is the case with this 1905 Kirin Dollar. The primary distinguishing feature of the host coin is the chopmarks, which were subsequently transferred onto the counterfeit dies and every fake that they produce.



Counterfeit China 1905 Kirin L&M-557 Dollar  
Left to Right: Coin 1 Reverse; Coin 2 Reverse  
*Click image to enlarge.*

Since the counterfeit was made using a die transfer method, the die characteristics match those of authentic Kirin 1905 Dollars. The forgery was made of silver just like its genuine counterpart. The flaw with these counterfeits is that they all feature the same repeating marks that can be used as diagnostics to detect the fakes. On the character side of the coin, such markers include the three chopmarks, a copied planchet flaw above the last character in the top legend, and several contact marks in the field. On the dragon side of the coin repeating marks include the chopmarks on the dragon, “damage” on the other side from the chopmarks, and rim damage at about 1 o’clock on the coin.



Counterfeit China 1905 Kirin Dollar  
Diagnostics Circled in Red  
*Click image to enlarge.*

Many collectors believe a coin must be “safe” if it has chopmarks, damage or other problems, but this is not a valid assumption. On a coin such as the 1905 Kirin Dollar that can sell for over \$1,000 with chopmarks, this forgery can net the counterfeiter a nice profit at the expense of collectors.

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United States

# From the NGC Archives: 1802/1 Draped Bust Quarter Eagle

Posted on 2/18/2014

*Robert Scots Draped Bust Quarter Eagle was first minted in 1796. Unlike the half eagle and eagle of similar design, this denomination never bore the so-called Small Eagle reverse.*

Its size was such that its reverse dies were interchangeable with those of the dime, and such mulings are indeed known for a few dates.



A mere 3,035 examples were coined of the 1802 quarter eagle, and scholar Walter Breen reported that 423 of these were minted the following year from dies dated 1802. Traditionally described as 1802/1, the exact attribution of this obverse die is uncertain. What is not in dispute is this issue's rarity. This is particularly true of high-grade examples, such as this splendid coin. Typically weak at its centers, this choice specimen is redeemed by magnificent coppery toning around its obverse periphery. Bright, with very frosty luster, it's among the finest known.

Are you interested in learning more about these coins? Click [here](#) to visit the NGC Coin Explorer and read on.

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# Chinese Coins: Panda Pair-adise

Posted by Peter Anthony on 2/18/2014

*Several Panda coins have animals on both sides.*

February is the second month of the year so it seems like a good time to look at Pandas that come in twos. We already know that the 1989 NYINC medals have a horse on one side and a Panda on the other. Are there any other Pandas with animals on both faces? Yes, there sure are.

The second Panda with animals on both faces is a 1/10 oz. gold medal that was issued in 1992 for the 20th Anniversary of the Normalization of Sino-Japanese Diplomatic Relations. The normalization of the relations between China and Japan after decades of bitterness was a diplomatic milestone. China released three gold Panda medals in 1987 to mark the 15th anniversary of the pact. Five years later the 1992 20th Anniversary medals were put on sale at the Tokyo Coin Show with Taisei Coins handling the distribution.

The medal design has a pair of Pandas on one side and a pair of cranes on the other. The crane represents longevity and auspiciousness in Chinese tradition. The image of a pair of these esteemed birds flying side-by-side symbolizes harmony between the two nations. The medal was shipped in a beautiful wooden box with the image of a pair of cranes in flight on it. Its official mintage is 3,000.



China 1992 Gold Panda Sino-Japanese 20th Anniversary 1/10 oz. Medal

It's not unusual to find two Pandas on one side of a coin, but how about Pandas on both sides? 2002 was the 20th anniversary of the Panda series. To mark the passing of 20 years the China Mint struck 20,000 1/10 oz. platinum coins. These have the design of the 1982 coins on the obverse while the reverse side carries the standard 2002 image of a bear striding through a bamboo forest.



China 2002 Platinum Panda 20th Anniversary 1/10 oz. Medal

If legendary creatures qualify then there are a couple of more Pandas with two animals on them. At the 1988 Hong Kong Expo a pair of medals with both dragons and pandas on them were issued: a 5 oz. silver and a 1 oz. gold. The silver medal sports perhaps the most whimsical design of any China Mint panda. On the reverse five small bears dance around while each holds up a stick to support a long effigy of a dragon. The obverse of this medal features a dragon's head inside a central circle. Mintage is 1,000 and the medals are not easy to find. The gold medal similarly has a Panda on one side and a dragon on the other. It has the lowest official mintage of any China Mint 1 oz. gold medal: 500.

As an aside, 1988 was near the end of the road for the 1 oz. gold Panda medal series. This is reflected in the mintage figures that are lower than previous years. Even these reduced official numbers may understate the decline. There is one 1988 Panda gold medal which is reliably reported to have a true mintage well below 500. What caused the decline? The early medals had instantly gone up in price. Early buyers could instantly flip the medals and turn a profit. By mid-1988 the market was saturated by the nine 1 oz. gold Panda medals released within three years. Demand fell, dealers cancelled orders and the number of medals actually struck was cut back.

Today the low mintages and low survival rates of many Pandas have made them scarce. It is often a real challenge to put together Panda sets. The Dragon is a traditional Chinese symbol of power, strength and good luck for the deserving. These are qualities that all numismatists can use as they search for Panda coins and medals.

Peter Anthony is an expert on Chinese modern coins with a particular focus on Panda coins. He is an analyst for the [NGC Chinese Modern Coin Price Guide](#) as well as a consultant on Chinese modern coins.

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United States

# Member and Club Challenges, Money Museum Activities Highlight ANA's 2014 National Coin Week

Posted by ANA on 2/18/2014

*The ANA encourages hobbyists to reach out in their communities and promote the hobby.*

National Coin Week, April 20-26, is a great opportunity to spread the joys of numismatics in the community. The theme for this year's event is "Coin & Country: Celebrating Civic Service," and activities will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Kennedy half-dollar and President John F. Kennedy's famous challenge: "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country."



The ANA is holding a contest that promotes civic service, and all ANA members can enter by volunteering at a non-profit organization such as a school, advocacy center, park, museum or other qualified organization and documenting their experiences. Entries can be

in video (under 3 minutes) or image-and-text format (150-300 words with image). The member who best promotes the merit of his or her non-profit and the importance of volunteerism will receive a 2014 American Eagle quarter ounce gold proof coin; silver commemorative coins and 2014 proof sets will also be awarded.

An activity for students K-12 encouraging children to get involved in their communities is also offered. For more information about these contests, go to <http://www.money.org/nationalcoinweek>.

A quiz on numismatic knowledge for ANA member clubs is available. The challenge includes 20 questions about Kennedy, the half dollar and civil service in numismatics. Answers are due to the ANA by May 5, and all clubs that achieve the high score will be entered into a drawing to receive prizes. The grand prize is a 1981 Willa Cather American Arts Commemorative Series half ounce gold medal produced by the U.S. Mint. Silver commemorative coins and proof sets will also be awarded.

To register your club and receive the challenge and fun promotional materials, email [ncw@money.org](mailto:ncw@money.org) or complete the [online form](#).

On April 26, the Edward C. Rochette Money Museum will host an open house with free admission. There will be coin-making demonstrations at the Mini-Mint, where 2014 National Coin Week tokens will be given to visitors. Children can dig for treasure in a pirate's chest, where one lucky treasure hunter will find a gold coin. Young visitors can spin the wheel for prizes, National Coin Week medals and more. One lucky visitor will enter the ANA Cash Cube and get 30 seconds to grab as much money as possible.

Throughout National Coin Week, children can take a quiz leading them through the Money Museum with participants receiving a 2014 Kennedy half dollar.

The ANA encourages hobbyists to reach out in their communities and promote the hobby. There are promotional resources available at [www.money.org/nationalcoinweek](http://www.money.org/nationalcoinweek) including a proclamation, sample press release, interactive brochure, reading list and music playlist.

Every year during the third full week of April, the ANA and its members celebrate National Coin Week by letting others know about the joys of collecting and studying coins and other forms of money. To get involved in 2014 National Coin Week, call 719-482-9814, email [ncw@money.org](mailto:ncw@money.org) or go to [www.money.org/nationalcoinweek](http://www.money.org/nationalcoinweek).

The American Numismatic Association is a congressionally chartered nonprofit educational organization dedicated to encouraging people to study and collect money and related items. The ANA helps its 25,500 members and the public discover and explore the world of money through its vast array of education and outreach programs, as well as its museum, library, publications, conventions and

seminars. For more information, call 719-632-2646 or visit [www.money.org](http://www.money.org).

*This is a guest article. The thoughts and opinions in the piece are those of their author and are not necessarily the thoughts of the Certified Collectibles Group.*

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# Top-tier Rare Coin Company Accepting Bitcoin as Payment

Posted on 2/18/2014

*Harlan J. Berk Ltd. has embraced the digital currency as a form of payment.*

[CHICAGO, IL] — One of the country's most respected rare coin companies, Harlan J. Berk Ltd., (HJB), is now accepting Bitcoins as a form of payment in an effort to provide better service to their clientele.

Scrutinized by some and embraced by others, are Bitcoins the currency of the future, or just a fad?

As more and more of our everyday interactions move towards the intangible, founder Harlan J. Berk is excited to offer this forward thinking, cutting edge payment option.

"Sometimes being a leader means taking a leap of faith into the unproven to either confirm or deny its feasibility," said Mr. Berk.

The kickoff for this new endeavor will begin immediately. All numismatic coins can be purchased with the use of bitcoins on the HJB website at <http://hjb ltd.com>.

"After much research and evaluation we have decided to embrace this new paradigm in one of the ways we receive payment for our inventory; ancient coins, world coins, U.S. coins, paper money, maps and antiquities," said Aaron Berk, son of Harlan J. Berk.

About Harlan J. Berk Ltd.:

Harlan J. Berk Ltd. was established in 1964 by Mr. Harlan J Berk himself, and has been located for decades in the same well-known downtown Chicago business and financial district at 31 North Clark Street. The facility's retail store is located on the main level with an additional library consisting of over 17,000+ research books that the firm makes available to clients. The company has a very large

online presence and global clientele. Since 1992, family members have taken charge of several departments. To learn more about the experts at Harlan J. Berk Ltd., please visit <http://bit.ly/1ezlG99>.

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